

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
March 20, 2012
City Council Chambers – Rouss City Hall**

PRESENT: President Jeff Buettner; Councilor Evan Clark, John Hill, John Tagnesi and Les Veach; Vice-Mayor Milt McInturff; Mayor Elizabeth Minor; Vice-President John Willingham (8)

ABSENT: None (0)

Items for Discussion:

Presentation: Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative

John Coffey, President of SVEC, presented a brief update on their current projects. He stated the northern substation upgrades were completed on February 24th. Unfortunately, this completion was after several outages in January. Construction on the south substation should begin during the middle part of the year with completion by the end of the year. He stated he appreciates the patience extended to the SVEC and they will continue to look at the system to see what maintenance and improvements are needed.

Winchester Parking Authority – Financial Situation & Subsidized Parking Requests

Dick Helm, WPA Chairman, stated the WPA was here to ask for guidance. When they took on the new garage, it was with the expectation that the WPA would be able to cover the costs. They can do that except for about three quarters of a million dollars in maintenance issues at the garages. The WPA does not feel there is a critical structural need but it is getting close. The WPA is not confident the rental fees will hold as they are beginning to get push back from clients on rate increases.

Mr. Helm stated the second item the WPA needs guidance on from Council on is fees. The charter says WPA can offer parking for a fee. They have received requests for free or subsidized parking from various groups. The WPA does not feel empowered to make those decisions and feel it is the funding agent who should make the decision. The WPA is charged with a narrow role for parking and would like not to be a referee in these situations.

R-2012-15: Resolution – Authorize the execution of agreements with VDOT and Winchester and Western Railroad Company for improvements to traffic safety devices at railroad crossings

Utilities Director Perry Eisenach presented the request to authorize the signing of an agreement to use federal railroad safety funds to replace flashing lights on two crossings

in Winchester. The use of the funds requires a three part agreement between the parties.

Vice-President Willingham moved to forward R-2012-15 to Council. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Veach then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

R-2012-16: Resolution – Approve the improvements to be included in the Indian Alley Improvements Project

Mr. Eisenach presented the resolution and asked for approval at the April Council meeting. He stated an open house was held in February and some of the comments received were incorporated into the design. He has also met with business owners to inform them of any impacts from the project. The portion of the alley north of Cork Street will be done in July and the portion south of Cork Street will be done in August. This will shorten the impact on two of the businesses with their main access in the alley. The project will replace underground water and sewer lines, install brick sidewalks down a majority of the alley, and help to slow traffic. A 4-way stop sign is recommended at the Indian Alley and the unnamed alley that exits out to Braddock Street where there is currently a mirror to reduce the blind spot. Other recommendations include additional street lights for improved lighting, two raised crosswalks to slow traffic, raised islands to delineate parking, and the planting of 14 trees.

Vice-President Willingham moved to forward R-2012-16 to Council. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Veach then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

R-2012-17: Resolution – Accept the recommendations by the OTDB for design elements to be included in the Pedestrian Mall Improvement Project

Mr. Eisenach stated the Old Town Development Board presented ideas for improvements on the pedestrian mall last October. Those ideas were presented at an open house where a lot of comments were received. Since then, the OTDB has made some changes to the design. He asked for Council's approval on which items to include in the final design so construction can begin in January 2013.

Karen Helm, Director of Old Town, stated a lot of the public input asked for the gateways to be similar and more reflective to the historic nature. There was a lot of conversation on what the center gateway should look like. Since it is the center of town, many people wanted something more symbolic. The one amenity the downtown merchants have asked for is public bathrooms. Bathrooms on the south end of the mall in an independent building and a pay as you go feature. The bathrooms would be anchored by the splash area. Another item that received a lot of discussion was the pavers and trees should be placed to cause visitors to meander through the mall.

Vice-President Willingham asked how many parking spaces will be lost in the existing lot where the bathrooms are being proposed. Ms. Helm stated the city would lose 14 parking spaces. The parking lot is one of the only properties owned by the city. During the months of December and January, the lot was visited 81 times with an average of 4.4

vehicles in the spaces in the lot. The lot contains 23 spaces with 8 rented to Taxi USA and the rest metered.

Vice-President Willingham asked if there will be ongoing maintenance expenses. Mr. Eisenach stated the biggest maintenance will be for the restroom at \$20,000. The splash pad will have the next highest expense. The water will be recycled by it must be chlorinated. Each of the gateway features will have some maintenance too with the water features.

Councilor Willingham asked to tie the expenses to the secondary tax district or some type of funding mechanism. City Attorney Anthony Williams stated a resolution would be the simplest means to do so but it does not provide a guarantee 10 years from now that Council won't decide to change it.

Vice-President Willingham moved to forward R-2012-17 including an amendment to fix the resolution to tie the capital improvements to some type of funding mechanism through the primary and secondary district. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Veach then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

R-2012-18: Resolution – Authorize the execution of an agreement with Glass-Glen Burnie Foundation for construction and maintenance of the Green Circle Trail

Mr. Eisenach stated since the project was approved last October, the Glen Burnie Foundation Board of Trustees have asked for minor adjustments in the agreement. The adjustments would change the alignment of the trail to go through the pine trees and line up with an entrance on Wood Avenue. Other items are for maintenance if the city ever decides to abandon the trail.

Councilor Veach moved to forward R-2012-18 to Council. *The motion was seconded by Vice-President Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

R-2012-19: Resolution – Approve modification to the intersection of Amherst Street and Linden Drive to restrict left turns onto Amherst Street from Linden or the CVS exit

Mr. Eisenach stated the project as currently configured does not include changes to the intersection at Linden Drive. There have been 24 accidents at that intersection in the past 5 years and is very dangerous. He suggested allowing traffic on Amherst to make left hand turns but traffic coming out of CVS or Linden Drive would only be allowed to make right hand turns.

Vice-President Willingham moved to forward option 1 to Council with the contingency that staff speak with the stakeholders. *The motion was seconded by Mayor Minor then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Comprehensive Radio Communications Project Status Report

Emergency Management Coordinator Lynn Miller presented a staff report and update on the communications project. He stated staff released an RFP for a communications plan with the guidance of Council to have 4 options.

Purchasing Manager Steve Corbitt presented a summary of the steps taken during the RFP process. He stated despite the efforts of Council or staff, one proposal with a combination of option 1 and 4 was received. This proposal will address the communications issues that are a concern with Council and staff. Staff will continue to review the proposal for costs and the findings will be submitted to Council for review and action in early April. Mr. Corbitt invited the members of Council to participate in the interview to be held next Monday.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: MOTION TO CONVENE IN EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO §2.2-3711(A)(3) AND (6) OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION OR CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBJECT OF the ACQUISITION OF AN INTEREST IN REAL PROPERTY FOR A PUBLIC PURPOSE AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT OF INVESTMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS WHERE BARGAINING IS INVOLVED, AND WHERE IF MADE PUBLIC, THE BARGAINING POSITION OR FINANCIAL INTEREST OF THE CITY WOULD BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AND PURSUANT TO §2.2-3711(A) (1) OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF INFORMATION REGARDING THE SUBJECT OF THE EMPLOYMENT, ASSIGNMENT, APPOINTMENT, AND PERFORMANCE OF SPECIFIC PUBLIC OFFICERS APPOINTEES, AND EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF WINCHESTER INCLUDING THE APPOINTMENT OF OR PROSPECTIVE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.

Vice-President Willingham moved to convene into executive session at 7:26 p.m. *The motion was seconded by Mayor Minor then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Vice-President Willingham moved to reconvene in open session at 9:42 p.m. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Clark then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Upon returning, each member certified that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed during the closed meeting, and that only those public business matters identified in the motion which convened the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered during the closed meeting.

A roll call vote was taken, the ayes and nays being recorded as shown below:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
President Buettner	Aye
Councilor Clark	Aye

Councilor Hill	Aye
Vice-Mayor McInturff	Aye
Mayor Minor	Aye
Councilor Tagnesi	Aye
Councilor Veach	Aye
Vice-President Willingham	Aye

Report of Liaisons

Councilor Veach stated the School Board will be sending forth a balanced budget with a 2% pay raise.

Submitted Written Reports

Fire & Rescue Department

Police Department

Adjourn

Mayor Minor moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 p.m. *The motion was seconded by Vice-President Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*